



city of
greenville

News Release

AUTUMN EXPECTING SECOND CALF

Greenville Zoo announces pregnancy just in time for Valentine's Day

Greenville, S.C. – Autumn, the Greenville Zoo's 7-year-old Masai giraffe, is pregnant again and is expected to give birth sometime this summer. This will be the second calf for Walter, 8 years old, and Autumn, who gave birth to Kiko in October 2012. Nearly one million viewers worldwide watched the live stream of the Giraffe Exhibit on the zoo's GiraffeCam, and viewers will once again have the opportunity to watch Autumn during her second pregnancy.

"This is great news for the zoo, the Greenville community and the giraffe Species Survival Program," said Greenville Zoo Director Jeff Bullock. "We know the birth of Kiko truly captivated our community, and we hope our new addition will receive the same welcome to Greenville."

Veterinary staff confirmed Autumn's pregnancy through hormone analysis and will continue to watch her progress through her 15-month gestation period. According to Dr. Heather Miller, Deputy Administrator for Animal Health at the Greenville Zoo, Autumn will be monitored primarily through weighing her every few weeks. "Unfortunately, Autumn is not trained for us to perform ultrasounds on her, but she does go through our giraffe restraint device daily and it is very easy to obtain an accurate weight on her."

Giraffe births are a bit unusual in that they give birth while standing, and the baby is born hooves-first. A newborn calf, which can weigh between 120-150 pounds and stand 6-feet tall at birth, will usually take its first steps within an hour of its birth. Giraffes are one of the few animals born with horns on their heads. "I want to thank all zoo staff members for providing the giraffes and all the animals in the zoo's collection with exceptional care," Bullock added. "It is because of their dedication and commitment that the Greenville Zoo can participate in the Species Survival Programs."

Both Walter and Autumn are on loan to the Greenville Zoo as part of a breeding loan. Autumn came from the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston, where she was born on January 7, 2006. Walter was born on November 9, 2005 and came from the San Diego Zoo. Both animals arrived in Greenville in July 2007 as part of a three-way loan agreement. According to the agreement, the first calf (Kiko) belongs to the owner of the dam, which is the Franklin Park Zoo. The second calf will belong to the owner of the sire (the San Diego Zoo), and the third calf will belong to the Greenville Zoo.

“Autumn has proven to be an excellent mother, and we anticipate that she will take great care of a new calf,” said Dr. Miller.

ABOUT THE MASAI GIRAFFE

The tallest animal on earth, giraffes can grow to stand 19 feet and weigh more than 3,000 pounds. Masai giraffe, also known as Kilimanjaro Giraffe, is the largest of the up to nine subspecies of giraffe recognized. Giraffes are best known for their long necks, which have only seven vertebrae—similar to a human's neck. This physical characteristic allows them to browse on high ranging foliage beyond the reach of competing antelopes and to watch for predators such as lions. In the wild, giraffes can be found living in loose open herds in the savannas of Africa. Their pale buff coats are boldly marked with irregular chestnut or dark brown blotches which help to camouflage them in their surroundings. Giraffe markings are as unique as human fingerprints; no two animals display the same. Giraffes have an unusually long lifespan compared to other ruminants, up to 25 years in the wild and often longer in zoos.

About the Greenville Zoo

Accredited by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA), the Greenville Zoo is rated one of the best tourist attractions in South Carolina, attracting over 270,000 people annually. Operated by the City of Greenville, the 14-acre facility features wildlife from around the world, including elephants, giraffes, monkeys and giant tortoises. Visitors can also enjoy one of the zoo's most popular exhibits, the Reptile Building, which is home to a variety of lizards, frogs, turtles and snakes.

The Greenville Zoo is open seven days a week, except on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Zoo entry ticket sales close at 4:15 p.m. Admission to the Greenville Zoo is \$8.75 for adults and \$5.50 for children (ages 3-15 years old). For more information about the Greenville Zoo, visit www.greenvillezoo.com or follow the zoo on Facebook at facebook.com/greenvillezoo.



Contact:

Jeff Bullock
Greenville Zoo Director
(864) 444-1480

Dr. Heather Miller
Deputy Administrator for Animal Health
(864) 350-2948